

BERLIN, Germany

April 9, 1919.

FROM: Capt.B.J.Valdes

TO: Lieut.Col.E.W.Ryan

SUBJECT: Russian Prison Camp at Merseburg

Location and General Appearance -

This camp is located about three and a half kilometers from the town of Merseburg. It is of clay-sandy soil with open surface drainage, and some underground canalization. It was very clean and well-kept.

Camp Government - Military and Prison Personnel -

A German officer, Captain Paulus, is in charge of the German detachment, and works in perfect harmony with the American officers in the camp, for the benefit of the Russian prisoners. The American officers are - Major Frank P. Sessions, Inf., U.S.A., 1st Lieut. Torrence R. Rogers, Inf., U.S.A. and 1st Lieut. George George A. Mueller, M.C., U.S.A. There are two Russian doctors in charge of the lazaret. There are in the camp 3983 Russian prisoners and about 2000 in addition in commando.

Lazaret -

The lazaret is composed of three barracks, for medical, surgical and infectious cases consecutively. There were 163 patients classified as follows - Medical barrack 90; Surgical barrack, 16 cases of minor surgery and 26 convalescent; Infectious barrack, 30 Tuberculosis, 1 Erysipelas. The wards were cleanly kept, but ventilation was poor. The following material is requested by Lieut. Mueller: Alcohol, glycerine, codeine and terpine tablets, a sterilizer to boil instruments, an Esmarch's rubber bandage, bacon and cod liver oil.

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Dietary and Supplies of Camp -

The kitchen was large, clean and well-ventilated. The food is given out daily by the American officer in charge, and a Sergeant remains in the kitchen until all the food material has been put in the boiler. The bread for the prisoners and prison personnel is made in the camp in a large bakery. The warehouse space consists of two barracks, one in the camp which can hold five carloads of supplies and another in the town which can hold about four. Corporal John L. Loomis was put in charge of the warehouse.

Sanitation and General Hygiene -

Water supply is good, it coming directly from the town. The toilets were rather dirty, with the walls completely broken off, but Lieut. Mueller was having them cleaned and arranged.

Propaganda -

This camp being situated in a mining district, and under the influence of the Spartacists, is naturally the seat of a strong Bolshevist feeling. The prisoners refuse to work in the camp and frequently steal large quantities of bread from the storeroom.

B. J. BALDES, Capt., A.R.C.